

REMARKS

The Official Action of November 4, 2004, an *Ex parte* Quayle Action closing further prosecution on the merits and indicating allowability of the claims, has been carefully reviewed. The claims in the application remain as claims 1-12, and these claims define patentable subject matter as indicated in the Office Action, i.e. such claims define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103. Applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and early formal allowance.

Acknowledgement by the PTO of the receipt of applicant's papers filed under Section 119 is noted.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 8 have been objected to as containing certain "informalities". Applicant has amended the claims above as best deemed possible to obviate the noted informalities. Applicant understands that the objections are considered by the PTO to be entirely formal, and that the claims have not required any substantial amendments relating to patentability, particularly in view of the stated allowability of such claims in their unamended form.

Accordingly, the amendments made above are of a formal nature only, i.e. made to place the claims in improved form for U.S. practice. The amendments are not "narrowing" amendments because the scope of the claims has not been reduced. No limitations have been added and none are intended.

Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objections.

Appln. No. 09/893,543
Amd. dated January 4, 2005
Reply to Office Action of November 4, 2004

As noted above, the Office Action indicates that the claims are allowable, and applicant understands that the PTO deems applicant's claims to define novel and unobvious subject matter under §§102 and 103. As indicated in paragraph 5 at the top of page 4, the present application is in condition for allowance except for certain minor informalities which have been addressed above.

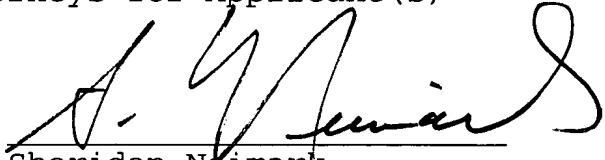
The prior art documents made of record and not relied upon have been noted, along with the implication that such documents are deemed by the PTO to be insufficiently pertinent to warrant their application against any of applicant's claims.

Favorable consideration and early formal allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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